



Submitted by Lori Kibbe Clinical Liaison & Home Care Nurse
Elara Caring

H.B. No. 5040 AN ACT CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee, my name is Lori Kibbe, Clinical Liaison for Elara Caring Home Care. I am also a Behavioral Health nurse of 35 years with both inpatient and Home Care experience.

Elara Caring, formerly New England Home Care, is the largest provider of Behavioral Health Home Care in CT—we serve approximately 3500 patients throughout Connecticut.

Behavioral Health services provided in the community are crucial to the success of the state's plan to allow people to live in their homes, not in institutions. Today, I ask you open your ears and your minds to what I share with you.

I have dedicated my life to keeping people in their own homes and not in institutions, to keep people from returning to the Hospital time and time again, to build a trusting relationship with people who often have no one else in their life, to assure safety and basic needs.

Behavioral Health nurses show up every day, through the blizzards the hurricanes, Pandemics, nothing stops us. We are the lifeline to a large very vulnerable population.

Who showed up every day during COVID lockdowns, when everyone else closed their doors and no one would see a patient in person? The visiting nurses showed up every day, and we are still showing up to ensure our patients are not left alone suffering from their increased depression, anxieties, delusional behavior, or addictions.

The practitioners or prescribers trust professionally seasoned nurses' assessments to be their eyes and ears. They rely on us to report outcomes of medication changes, medication compliance, mental status changes, thoughts of Suicide or Homicide, just to name a few responsibilities.

We go above and beyond every day to assure our patients are safe and have basic needs. Our free time during Covid was organizing sewing groups to make masks for our most vulnerable population; we worked food drives and delivered food so they would not be without while they were isolated in their homes; we vaccinated the public; we will do whatever it takes to keep our communities safe.

We give up our family life, far more than you will ever imagine, we stop what we are doing and answer that call from a patient who we know is struggling.

Over the years I showed up to people's homes never knowing what I may find. We are often in the most dangerous neighborhoods. I have been shot at, assaulted, and every day, visiting nurses get back up and return to their patients.

We all know Mental Health is at an all-time high for Suicide and Death by Substance Use. I am asking you to please find a way to help us retain the nurses we have and with the additional Monies can help increase our staffing issues by returning the remaining 10.5% you cut back in 2016.



Please, we need you working with us, side by side as we make huge strides to save the lives of those suffering from Mental Illness and Substance Use disorders.

Thank you,

Lori Kibbe

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